

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. In response to the Office Action mailed April 11, 2005, claims 1, 6, 11, and 16 are currently amended. No claims are added or cancelled. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following comments, allowance of all the claims pending in the application is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3, 6-8, 11-13, and 16-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,101,500 to Lau ("Lau") in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0091696 to Craft *et al.* ("Craft"). Applicants traverse this rejection on the following grounds.

Independent claim 1 recites, among other things, the feature of hierarchical data list creating means for enabling client terminal users to create at least one hierarchical data list within the database, the at least one hierarchical data list comprising the at least one hierarchical data container and the at least one hierarchical data element, and storing means for storing data in the at least one hierarchical data container and the hierarchical data element. Independent claims 6, 11, and 16 include similar recitations, among other things.

In an exemplary embodiment of the invention, hierarchical data objects may be implemented to store information. For example, a hierarchical data list, stored in a database, ("HDL") may include collections of hierarchical data container ("HDC") and other hierarchical data elements ("HDE"). An HDC may include a particular type of HDE that includes a name and pointers to a list of one or more other HDEs included in the same HDL. This recursive data architecture may enable complex hierarchies of data object and may enable data inheritance. See the Specification at page 3, line 1; and page 4, lines 1-5 and 18-22.

Lau is apparently drawn to a system for managing objects in a network management program. See Lau at col. 4, lines 30-32. The system proposed by Lau merely determines a composite index for network objects in a hierarchical structure,

based on expert evaluations of one or more network parameters. See Lau at col. 4, lines 33-35. In particular, Lau is deficient because Lau does not disclose a database having hierarchical data lists, hierarchical data containers, and hierarchical data elements. As a result, Lau cannot teach or suggest hierarchical data list creating means for enabling client terminal users to create at least one hierarchical data list within the database, the at least one hierarchical data list comprising the at least one hierarchical data container and the at least one hierarchical data element, and storing means for storing data in the at least one hierarchical data container and the hierarchical data element. Rather Lau is directed to creating an index of a pre-existing computer network.

The Examiner acknowledges that "Lau does [sic] not specifically disclose the claimed limitations of 'storing means for storing data in the at least one hierarchical data container wherein the data stored by the at least one hierarchical data list comprises a concept.'" See the Office Action at page 3, lines 7-9. The Examiner relies on Craft for this feature. Craft appears to disclose opening and saving data assets (e.g., database files, picture files, database records, wordprocessing files) within an asset storage system. See Craft at paragraph 0017. However, Craft does not address the deficiency of Lau outlined above.

Accordingly, the rejection of independent claims 1, 6, 11, and 16 based on Lau in view of Craft is improper and must be withdrawn because the references do not teach or suggest all of the features of the claimed invention. Further, claims 2, 3, 7, 8, 12, 13, 17, and 18 depend from corresponding ones of claims 1, 6, 11, and 16, and, therefore, are allowable based on their dependency, as well as for the features that they add to the independent claims.

Claims 4, 5, 9, 10, 14, 15, 19, and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Lau in view of Craft, and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,034,697 to Becker ("Becker"). Applicants traverse this rejection on the following basis.

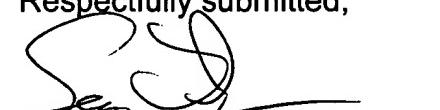
The Examiner admits that Lau and Craft do not teach or suggest the "specifically disclosed [sic] claimed limitations of 'wherein the color is defined according to a three dimensional color space.'" See the Office Action at page 5, lines 9 and 10. The Examiner relies on Becker for this feature. Becker apparently describes a data visualization tool that approximates a scatter plot and provides smooth animation of graphics by interpolated data. See Becker at the Abstract. However, Becker does not address the deficiency of Lau and/or Craft outlined above. Since claims 4, 5, 9, 10, 14, 15, 19, and 20 depend from corresponding ones of independent claims 1, 6, 11, and 16, claims 4, 5, 9, 10, 14, 15, 19, and 20 are allowable based on their dependency, as well as for the features that they add to the independent claims.

Having addressed each of the foregoing rejections, it is respectfully submitted that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

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Respectfully submitted,



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